

Leading with Purpose

A conversation with Dr. Frank Cooper III, Global Chief Marketing Officer of BlackRock

Many looked to the start of 2020 as the start of a new year and a new decade with hope and possibility. 2020 will go down in the history books, but perhaps not for how we imagined given the global pandemic that ensued. In times like this and **looking ahead into this year and beyond, it is important to understand what our collective vision and purpose is as a company.**

In April, Kim Dabbs, Global Director of **Social Innovation** at Steelcase, engaged in a conversation around Purpose with Dr. Frank Cooper III, Global Chief Marketing Officer of and Senior Managing Director at BlackRock.

Dabbs explains: “We need to continue to lead by connecting people with purpose for lasting change. We all have a part to play, but **what does purpose mean** for companies, for communities and for us as individuals?”

BlackRock is a leading global investment management corporation and has been leading the way in envisioning a different way to think about the role of business in society. A vision of a world in which well-being and financial profit are joined in ensuring prosperity for all stakeholders.

Dr. Frank Cooper III says: “**Every crisis is an opportunity to amplify, accelerate and reveal what’s already there.** Our collective resilience is not going away; on the contrary, it is going to build. My interpretation of resilience is the ability to tap into our resources and bounce back from adversity. We have seen this type resilience applied to many different areas, including what people expect from companies: I am convinced that what we have seen around the Purpose-driven movement will only accelerate”.

“Purpose includes People and Planet”, Cooper mentions, sustainability and climate action inevitably have to be part of the discussion. Each Company has to decide how it will make a difference based on its capabilities and operations. One thing to look out for, though, is that you do not look at climate action in a silo because it has a disproportionate impact on diverse communities. “**Climate action and Social Justice have to go together.** We should recognize that the communities that are contributing the least to the problem are the ones suffering the most. **As we transition to a new net zero economy, we need to make sure that this transition is inclusive**”.

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